



...The Anthracite City...

THE passage of the act which made Carbondale the pioneer city of Northeastern Pennsylvania was secured by S. S. Benedict who was a member of the lower house of the Legislature in 1851 assisted by Hon. C. R. Buckalew in the senate. The burdens of going by stage coach to Wilkes-Barre thirty-three miles away to attend court were so onerous that efforts had been made several times to have the county divided and this city made a county seat. After the first great fire fifty years ago it was decided that the village must have a separate government from that of Carbondale township. To secure the benefits of local courts it was decided to skip the intermediate form of Borough government and apply for a city charter which would include a mayor's court.

The situation at that time is tersely expressed in the following report taken from the *Lackawanna Journal* of October 18, 1850.

Public Meeting.

At a public meeting assembled at Concert hall on the afternoon of the 5th instant, William Ball, Esq., was called to the chair and Lewis Jones, Esq., was appointed secretary. The object of the meeting being stated by the chairman it was resolved:

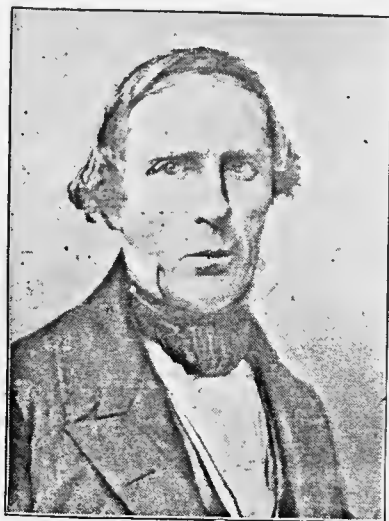
1st. That as the first of a series of measures necessary for our protection against fire, we take early steps to procure through the legislature a city corporation.

2nd. That a committee of twenty-five citizens be appointed to act as a police on all occasions of fire to protect property from plunder, that has been rescued from the flames; and that Thomas Dickson, Evan Harris, and Thomas Gillespie select such committee and report at a future meeting.

3d. That a committee of seven be appointed to procure, by subscription, funds adequate for the purchasing of engines and hose to extinguish fires, if

such should again occur. Whereupon the president appointed James Archbald, James Dickson, Thomas Gillespie, Judson Clark, Anthony Miles, Anthony Grady and Henry Evans said committee.

On March 15th, of the next year governor William F. Johnston signed the city charter. The other names which appear upon the document are those of John Cessna, speaker of the House and Benjamin Mathias, speaker of the Senate. The act contained forty different sections covering twelve pages of the volume of



JAMES ARCHBALD,
Our First Mayor.